

HYDE COUNTY HOTLINE, INC.

We are committed to promoting dignity, respect and safety at home resulting in safer community.

Visit us at: Website: HydeCounty-Hotline.org Facebook: [Hyde County Hotline](https://www.facebook.com/HydeCountyHotline)

September 2020

Common Reactions to Sexual Assault



People who become victims of sexual assault typically experience the victimization as a traumatic event. There are common reactions to this kind of trauma or shock; but at the same time, each person responds in her own unique way.

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Fear Responses

The most common victim reaction to sexual assault is fear. At the time of the assault, most victims have an overwhelming experience of fear-- of being physically injured (beaten, cut, shot, etc.) or even of being killed. Fear responses associated with the assault (to certain sights, sounds, smells, thoughts, etc.) can persist for weeks, months, or even years. Victims who have been assaulted typically avoid anything which reminds them of the assault (places, situations, people, etc.). Some men and women become so fearful that they greatly restrict their activities, even to the point that they are unable to leave their homes or to be left alone.

Flashbacks

Victims may re-experience the assault over and over again in their thoughts and/or in their dreams. When this happens, it is almost as though the assault is actually occurring again. This re-experience of the event is called a flashback.

Trouble Concentrating

Sexual assault victims may find that they have trouble concentrating on things. It is as though they cannot keep their minds on what they are doing. This can be frustrating and add to the sense of loss of control.



Guilty Feelings

The most common source of guilty feelings is the result of self-blame. The victims tell themselves such things as, "I should not have been out that late," or "I should have been dressed differently," or "If I had been more careful about locking the door, this would not have happened." Sexual assault victims may also feel guilty about what they had to do in order to survive the assault, such as activities the victim felt he or she had to engage in an effort to save him- or herself from serious physical harm or even death. In some instances, guilty feelings result from the fact that others may have been seriously harmed more than the victim herself. This is referred to as survivor's guilt.



Feeling "Dirty"

Self-image frequently suffers as a result of the assault. Many victims report feeling "dirty" and may take frequent showers in an effort to feel clean.

Depression

Another common reaction to sexual assault is a sense of sadness or depression. There may be feelings of hopelessness and despair, frequent crying spells, and sometimes even thoughts of suicide. A loss of interest in activities and things that previously were enjoyable often accompanies these feelings of sadness and despair. Nothing seems like it is fun anymore.

Fear and Anxiety

Fear and anxiety are difficult to distinguish from each other. In general, fear usually has a specific object (person, place, situation, etc.) that is identified as the feared object. Anxiety (worry, uneasiness, distress, etc.) on the other hand, is usually vaguer. For example, weeks, even months, after the assault, it is not uncommon for victims to describe a feeling of general uneasiness or jitteriness-- a feeling that something bad is going to happen.

Victims of sexual assault may experience both fear and anxiety. Long after the assault, victims may continue to experience a fear response triggered by any number of reminders of the sexual assault. The triggers or stimuli might be certain features of the man who assaulted you, such as skin color, facial hair, body build, type of dress, and so forth. It might be related to the situation or the setting in which the assault took place, such as dark nights, country roads, or even your own home. In other words, anything which remind you of the assault may serve as a trigger for a fear response. Places, situations, smells, etc. are often avoided because these stimuli remind the victim of the assault and trigger the fear reaction.



Summary

Typical responses to sexual assault are one or more of the following:

- Fear responses to reminders of the assault;
- Feeling like you are losing control of your life or your mind;
- Re-experiencing assault over and over again through flashbacks;
- Problems concentrating and staying focused on the task at hand;
- Guilty feelings;
- Developing a negative self-image; feeling “dirty” inside or out;
- Depression;
- Fear and anxiety cause physical, mental, and behavioral reactions, all of which may lead the assault survivor to feel as though he or she has no control over her life.
- Most importantly, all of these reactions are normal responses to the traumatic event you have experienced.

[Source](#)



HYDE COUNTY HOTLINE, INC.

Now accepting applications

Part-Time Shelter Advocacy Staff Positions

**WE'RE
HIRING!**

Call for further information and job application

252-925-2502

Monday – Friday

8:30-4:30

Online inquiries will not be accepted

Hyde County Hotline

Offers

Crisis Intervention, Advocacy and Prevention

Confidential Emergency Shelter

24 Hour Crisis Line 252-925-2500

PO Box 335

Engelhard, NC 27824

Tel: (252-)925-2502

WHAT WE DO

- Crisis Intervention
- Domestic and Sexual Advocacy
- Human Trafficking Advocacy
 - Survivor Services
 - Safe Shelter
 - Support Groups
 - Referrals
- Programs and Presentations
- Participates with DSS Work First Program

Bring Hope to Mothers and Babies in Hyde County

We need your help assisting young mothers. The first weeks of a newborn's life are the most critical.

You can help better young lives by giving a new mother the essential things they need to care for their newborns.

We are asking the community to come together to donate to assist our agency in providing car seats, cribs, diapers, clothing, blankets, bottles, and baby care items to the clients we serve. These items will not only give a new baby a better start in life, but also bring hope and support to the new moms that are often already dealing with trauma and stress.

Our goal is to raise \$1,000.00 in order to provide these much-needed supplies. If you would prefer to donate an item, they can be dropped off at the Hyde County Thrift Store in Engelhard. Your gift is a sacred trust. We promise to honor your generosity and use your donation in the most effective way.



Crisis Intervention And Advocacy For Victims Of Domestic Violence ,Sexual Assault and Human Trafficking.

Please mail all monetary donations to Hyde County Hotline, Inc. PO Box 335,

OUR MISSION

The purpose of Hyde County Hotline, Inc. is to work to eliminate domestic abuse, sexual victimization and Human Trafficking and provide safe shelter in Hyde County, North Carolina through the collaborative efforts of a compassionate community. We promote dignity, respect and safety at home resulting in safer communities.

Wish List for Hyde County Hotline

Free shipping on wish list purchases over \$50.

[Wish List for Hyde County Hotline](#)

DomesticShelters.org

Hyde County Hotline

Serving victims of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Victimization

24 Hour Crisis Line

252-925-2500

PO Box 335, Engelhard, NC 27824
Advocacy Office 252-925-2502

Support Hyde County Hotline.

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Nothing Compares

FYSB Family & Youth Services Bureau

Family Violence Prevention & Services Program

Thrift Store Hours

Tuesday-Friday

9:30 - 2:00